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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/089,975	04/08/2002	Volker Reiffenrath	MERCK 2405	3306

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EXAMINER

WU, SHEAN CHIU

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1756

DATE MAILED: 11/15/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/089,975

Applicant(s)

REIFFENRATH ET AL.

Examiner

Shean C. Wu

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 November 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 and 8-41 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5, 8-23, 26, 27, 30-35 and 37-41 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 24, 25, 28, 29 and 36 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. Claims 3, 5, 18 and 21-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In Claim 5, the formula I4 does not have an antecedent basis because the CN group is excluded from claim 1.

In Claims 3 and 18, the CN group does not have an antecedent basis.

In Claim 21, line 2, the "compound" is vague and should be referred to ring A¹.

In Claim 22, line 2, the word "particular" should be deleted.

Double Patenting

2. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

3. Claims 1-5, 8-12, 14-20, 30-31 and 37-38 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-23 of U.S. Patent No. 6,808,764. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably

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distinct from each other because the claimed subject matters overlap each other. It is noted that right-hand terminal in the formula (IVa) is OCF_3 in Claim 7 of US '764. The OCH_3 is a typographical error. See formula (IVa) on col. 7 and Example 1 on col. 10, which Example 1 comprises the present formulae (I3, IV, VII and RII).

4. Claims 1-5, 8-20, 30-31, 37-38 and 40-41 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-31 of U.S. Patent No. 6,793,985. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the claimed subject matters overlap each other. See the liquid crystal medium in Examples 1-11, which comprises the present formulae (I1-I3, IV, VII, IX and RII).

5. Claims 1-4, 9-12, 14-20, 23, 26-27, 30-35, 37-38 and 40-41 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-18 of U.S. Patent No. 6,521,303. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the claimed subject matters overlap each other. The rejections are made in the previous Office action (8/7/03). After further reconsideration, the rejection is still maintained because the formula IVf in Claim 18 reads on the present formula I. Also, see the liquid crystal mixtures in the first Example on col. 28 and Examples bridging col. 29 and col. 30, which the mixtures comprise the present formulae (I3, IV, VII and RII).

6. Claims 1-4, 9-12, 14-20, 23, 30, 32-33, 37 and 40-41 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-17 of U.S. Patent No. 6,582,782. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the claimed subject matters overlap each other. See the liquid crystal medium in Example 30 on col. 39, which comprises the present formulae (I3, VIII and RII).

Allowable Subject Matter

7. Claims 24-25, 28-29 and 36 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Response to Arguments


8. Applicant's arguments, filed 11/03/04, with respect to the rejection(s) of claim(s) 1-5, 8-41 under Kato et al. and Bartmann et al have been fully considered and are persuasive. Therefore, the rejection has been withdrawn. However, upon further consideration, a new ground(s) of rejection is made in view of US '303, '782, '985 and '764 cited above. Also see 112, 2nd paragraph rejection in section 1 above.

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Shean C. Wu whose telephone number is 571-272-1393. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:30 AM to 6:00 PM.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mark Huff can be reached on 571-272-1385. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Shean C Wu
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1756

SCW